

Project Proposal: *Burnaby Malls Changing before My Eyes*

Intro: My idea for the class exhibition project is a video about what is going on around the major Burnaby malls (Metrotown, Brentwood, and Lougheed), how they've changed over time, and how I see them. This project will focus on both the wider themes of this class and more personal themes that resonate with me, having grown up in Burnaby and going to these malls.

Class Themes: Brentwood mall (a.k.a. The Amazing Brentwood) opened in 1961, Lougheed (a.k.a. The City of Lougheed) in 1969, and Metrotown (a.k.a. Metropolis at Metrotown) in 1986. All of these sites have grown significantly since their inception with SkyTrain and major bus routes running through them and high-rise condos being built in recent years. When I think about business and development in our current time I think about the massive amount of construction and how that has delayed and disrupted everyday life. The spacing just takes away the fun out of everything because there are lots of high rises and homes nowadays and less space for people to connect in public.

Personal Themes: This topic is also personal to me. I grew up in Burnaby and visited these spaces many times as a kid – and even still do now. I connect with autism by looking around shopping malls and seeing things in public. What I like doing when I see the world. Which is like connecting to autism in relation. Because it is like my childhood that brings back so many memories. Because when I think of the business of shops shut down for bankruptcy it's long gone forever. The rapidly changing landscapes once so familiar to me contribute to the feeling I have of being misunderstood by others. I wish people could accept me for who I am. Which is sad that I don't see restaurants and retail outlets around Burnaby anymore, because it brings me back like the old times and never lasts long. I remember that Lougheed mall used to have groceries like Safeway but moved to Burquitlam. What I like about Lougheed mall is Hudson's Bay because it was the first location around Burnaby until it closed in 2023. For Brentwood mall and Metrotown mall they used to have Zellers and Sears. The Zellers at Metrotown was replaced by Target and Target was replaced by Walmart. I missed those department stores that they used to have because they were a part of my childhood. Especially the dim sum restaurant near the SkyTrain.